

Education of LGBTQ+ Healthcare in the School of Health Science and Human Performance at Ithaca College

In recent years, the visibility of LGBTQ+ people (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) has increased in popular culture and academia. It has become abundantly clear that our current medical system does not have the adequate infrastructure to provide culturally competent health care that fits the needs of LGBTQ+ individuals (James, et al., 2016). Across the country, clinicians do not have a large enough understanding of the health needs of LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) people to give them the care they need. One major issue surrounding LGBTQ+ care is the knowledge healthcare providers have about LGBT care (Rafferty, 2018). The first step to removing the roadblocks to quality care is to assess the schools where future clinicians are learning how to provide health care. One national survey found that nursing students were only receiving 2.12 hours of education related to LGBTQ+ health (Lim, Johnson, & Eliason, 2015). For healthcare providers who will encounter a variety of problems in the field, not having a wide range of knowledge around LGBTQ+ health issues will lead to poorer outcomes for LGBTQ+ patients (Bosse, Nesteby, & Randall, 2015). Ithaca College is widely considered one of the most queer-friendly colleges in the United States and as such, it is expected to include LGBTQ+ topics in its curriculum (Doran, 2014). It is possible that, while other schools struggle to prepare healthcare students to adequately respond to the needs of LGBTQ+ patients, Ithaca College may have a unique approach to inclusive healthcare training that can serve as model for others. This study seeks to examine how the curriculum in the school of Health Science and Human Performance is working towards educating future healthcare professionals to provide culturally competent care to LGBTQ+ patients.

Resources

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